

EBOLA VIRUS ADVISORY TO EAST ORANGE RESIDENTS

As the media continues to report about Ebola Virus outbreaks in several West African countries, we are fortunate to have state-of-the-art medical facilities and practices in place to control and prevent its spread in the United States and in New Jersey. People returning from West Africa are **NOT LIKELY** to develop an Ebola infection unless they were in an area where the disease is or:

- a. They were in direct physical contact with body fluids (blood, vomit, feces, urine, breast milk, sweat, semen) of someone who is sick with Ebola symptoms or who has died from Ebola.
- b. They are a medical worker who got stuck with a needle that was used on an Ebola patient.
- c. They ate bush meat (wild meat) that was not thoroughly cooked or if they handled raw bush (wild) meat.

To date, the City of East Orange and East Orange General Hospital has experienced two episodes where individuals required screening for the Ebola virus. In both cases, the individuals were cleared by public health authorities and found to pose no threat to the general public. East Orange's Health Officer, Office of Emergency Management and hospital officials are in continuous communication with the Centers for Disease Control and the New Jersey State Department of Health to ensure the safety and well-being of our residents.

The New Jersey Department of Health continues to host informative teleconferences on the Ebola Virus Disease to convey important information to local Health Officers, OEM, EMS and health care providers. Collectively, they are monitoring the Ebola virus outbreak in West Africa and incidents in the United States. Airport screening at Newark International Airport started on October 16, 2014. Local hospitals continue to have mock drills in preparation to care for the presentation of persons who think that they may have been exposed to Ebola.

SYMPTOMS OF EBOLA INFECTION MAY BE SIMILAR TO THE FLU

Early symptoms may be fever, headache, joint and muscle aches, weakness, diarrhea, vomiting, stomach pain, and lack of appetite. Patients later may experience a rash, red eyes, hiccups, cough, sore throat, chest pain, difficulty breathing, difficulty swallowing and bleeding inside and outside of the body. **Symptoms may appear anywhere from 2 to 21 days after exposure to Ebola, but the average is 8 to 10 days.**

Although the current focus is on Ebola, the Health Department has issued a reminder on the health risks of influenza and other conditions that cause unnecessary illness, infirmity and death. Please remember to get your flu shots and to practice good hygiene **at all times**.

PRACTICE GOOD HYGIENE

Washing hands frequently with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer:

- Before and after eating and drinking.
- After sneezing, coughing, or blowing your nose.
- After touching your hair, face, nose etc.
- When washing, make sure hands are totally dry before touching any food.

Avoiding direct contact with infected/sick people:

- Do not handle items that may have come in contact with an infected person's blood or body fluids (such as clothes, bedding, needles, and medical equipment).

Please visit the web sites below for additional public information on Ebola:

NJDOH Ebola Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

http://www.nj.gov/health/cd/vhf/documents/ebola_faq.pdf

NJDOH Ebola Information for Friends and Family Returning to NJ from West Africa

http://www.nj.gov/health/cd/vhf/documents/West_Afr.pdf

NJDOH Questions and Answers on Ebola

<http://www.nj.gov/health/cd/vhf/qa.shtml>